

Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission
Aloma Dew, Chair, *Owensboro*
Betsy Bennett, Vice-Chair, *Louisville*
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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION
14 REILLY ROAD
FRANKFORT, KY 40601-1132

PAUL E. PATTON
GOVERNOR

The Environmental Quality Commission (EQC), a seven-member citizen board that advises the Governor and other state officials on environmental matters, would like to call your attention to the attached resolution concerning the mining of federal coal reserves on the Daniel Boone National Forest.

EQC has concerns regarding the impacts that coal mining could have on Kentucky's only national forest. We are especially concerned about two recent proposals to lease federal coal minerals by the Chas Coal Company and the Southfork Coal company.

We hope you will review our attached resolution and support our recommendations. Please feel free to contact Leslie Cole, Executive Director, at the Commission, if you have any questions concerning the resolution.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aloma W. Dew".

Aloma Dew, Chair

Cc: Kentucky's Congressional Delegation
Secretary James E. Bickford, Natural Resources Cabinet
Dale Bosworth, Chief, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Forest Service
Ben Worthington, Supervisor, Daniel Boone National Forest
Peter Roussopoulos, Station Director, U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Station
Don Graves, Chairman, University of Kentucky Dept. of Forestry



*Celebrating 30 years of protecting
Kentucky's environment*

**KENTUCKY ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION
RESOLUTION PERTAINING TO COAL MINING ON THE
DANIEL BOONE NATIONAL FOREST
MAY 30, 2002**

Whereas, The Daniel Boone National Forest (DBNF) is one of the most heavily used forests in the South, with over 5 million visitors annually coming to backpack, camp, picnic, rock climb, boat, hunt, fish and relax; and

Whereas, The Chas Coal Company has filed an application to lease federal coal reserves in the DBNF under 315.13 acres of land in Clay County and Southfork Coal has filed an application to lease federal coal reserves in the DBNF under 65 acres in McCreary County; and

Whereas, A portion of these federal minerals were those that were transferred from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) last year after the Environmental Quality Commission and others opposed the selling off of these minerals by TVA and urged their transfer to the U.S. Forest Service in hopes the land will remain off limits to mining; and

Whereas, While strip mining is prohibited on national forestland, underground coal mining is allowed and such mining could potentially impair water quality and disrupt supplies and cause subsidence which can collapse the land surface, causing damage to land and forest ecosystems; and

Whereas, The economic benefits of mining federal minerals in the Daniel Boone National Forest must be carefully weighed against its impacts to the natural diversity of the forest, threatened and endangered species and their habitat, water quality, archeological and cultural resources, recreational opportunities and the region's growing tourism economy; and

Whereas, The role of the U.S. Forest Service as public steward of the Daniel Boone National Forest requires that it place its highest priority in managing the land and its resources for the public good.

Now be it resolved by the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission;

1. That the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Office of Surface Mining move forward in preparing a coordinated Environmental Assessment (EA) of the Chas and Southfork mining proposals as required under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
2. That given the potential impacts of mining under the Daniel Boone National Forest, EQC requests that a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared to fully assess the impacts associated with the leasing of these federal minerals.
3. That the U.S. Forest Service, as part of its environmental analysis process, consider the impact mining of federal minerals on the Daniel Boone National Forest will have on tourism in the region including Congressman Hal Rogers' Regional Tourism Initiative for Southern and Eastern Kentucky – a blueprint for tourism slated to take the region to a “new level of prosperity and redefined image in the eyes of the nation and the world.”
4. That if a finding of “no significant impact” is made, the Bureau of Land Management ensure that fair market value for the federal coal reserves underlying the Daniel Boone National Forest is fully secured and that the U.S. Forest Service, the Ky. Department of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and the federal Office for Surface Mining work together to closely monitor mining operations to ensure the highest level of compliance with all state and federal rules.
5. That this resolution be forwarded to Gov. Paul Patton; Kentucky's Congressional Delegation; James Bickford, Secretary of the Kentucky Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet; Dale Bosworth, Chief, U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service; and Ben Worthington, Supervisor, Daniel Boone National Forest for consideration and action.

Passed May 30, 2002 by the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission

Aloma Dew, Chair

Bob Riddle

Patty Wallace

Betsy Rudd Bennett, Vice- Chair

Jean Dorton

Gary Revlett

Serena Williams

May 30, 2002